I.B.S. ENGINEERING OFFICE
31 Gray Street
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASS.

NBC BIOGRAPHY

September 16, 1961

SAM SHARKEY

NBC News Editor

Television has "earned its chevrons" as a full, equal and responsible news gathering and reporting medium, declares NBC News Editor Sam Sharkey who asks, as a case in point:

"Did you ever stop to compare the actions of a television reporter and a newspaper reporter when a story breaks unexpectedly and just before air time or deadline, as the case may be?

"The newspaperman gets to a phone, calls his city editor and is switched to a rewrite man, who takes the story and puts it in readable form. Then it's passed on to the copy desk where the copy is checked and slugged with a headline. Finally, it gets into print.

"Conversely, the TV reporter or commentator must throw a prepared script on the floor and, using the kind of scribbled notes all newsmen employ, ad lib his story on the air with the accuracy, balance and perception of a printed or scripted story.

"Thus, it stands to reason that not only is television news replete with challenge, but also with competent, intelligent craftsman who cannot crack under the extreme pressure of deadlines.

"The day of the pretty-faced, fair-voiced television newscaster has long gone. To be a TV newsman today, competence is the only criteria -- and if you happen to have a squeaky voice or an ugly face, that's okay, as long as you can do the job..."

(more)

Denver glasses
Weather - parking
fliers
questions + answers after

Sharkey has, at various times, been a newspaperman, an amateur actor, outboard motorist and automobile race driver, professional boxing announcer, college professor, teacher in a girls' school, and -- for one rehearsal only -- conductor of a symphony orchestra.

His present position includes riding herd on the style and content of the network news programs and undertaking special projects. In the latter capacity he acted as assignment editor during NBC's coverage of the 1956 political conventions and was responsible for setting up a special NBC transceiver system (in conjunction with IBM) for the 1956 election coverage. The last job necessitated more than 15,000 miles of travel and months of research to organize a private, high-speed wire service for reporting the election returns. He also supervised the 1958 election coverage for NBC.

He is noted as a witty and penetrating public speaker and has lectured from coast to coast for 15 years. His subjects include analysis of current events, politics, news and broadcasting.

Sharkey was born in Trenton, N. J., in 1915, and worked his way through Rutgers University as a reporter for the Trenton Times. During his 22 years of newspaper experience, Sharkey served on the Philadelphia Record, the Saratoga Springs (N. Y.) Saratogian, was foreign editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer and, for 10 years before coming to NBC in 1955, held various editorial posts on the New York Times, including that of head of the national news desk.

Among the memorable stories he coverd were the Lindbergh kidnaping and Hauptmann trial, and the explosion of the dirigible Hindenburg. Nespaper work also had him doing an "inquiring photographer" stint, writing "advice to the lovelorn," and covering

(more)

Sharkey has, at various times, been a newspaperman, an amateur actor, outboard motorite and automobile race driver, professional boxing announcer, college professor, teacher in a girls' school, and -- for one rehearsal only -- conductor of a symphony orchestra.

His present position includes reading herd on the style and content of the network news programs and undertaking special projects. In the latter capacity he acted as assignment editor during NBC's coverage of the 1956 political conventions and was responsible for setting up a special NBC transceiver system (in conjunction with IBM) for the 1956 election coverage. The last job necessitated more than 15,000 miles of travel and months of research to organize a private, high-speed wire service for reporting the election returns. He also supervised the 1958 election coverage for NBC.

He is noted as a witty and penetrating public speaker and has lectured from coast to coast for 15 years. His subjects include analysis of current events, politics, news and broadcasting.

Sharkey was born in Trenton, N. J., in 1915, and worked his way through Rutgers University as a reporter for the Trenton Times. During his 22 years of newspaper experience, Sharkey served on the Philadelphia Record, the Saratoga Sprynge (N. Y.) newspaper, was foreign editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer and, for 10 years before coming to NBC in 1955, held various editorial posts on the New York Times, including that of head of the national news desk.

Among the memorable stories he covered were the Lindbergh kidnaping and Hauptmann trial, and the explosion of the dirigible Hindenburg. Newspaper work also had him doing an "inquiring photographer" skit, writing "Advice to the Lovelorn," and covering

(more)

politics, sports, drama, books and music. It was as a music critic that he had his short-lived experience as an orchestra conductor. "At a rehersal one afternoon," Sharkey says "the conductor wanted to hear the orchestra from the back of the room, so he handed me the baton. I waved it."

Sharkey is married to the former Mary Frances Bicknell and has a 15-year-old daughter, Constance. The Sharkeys reside in Weston, Conn.

-----o-----

NBC-New York, 9/16/61